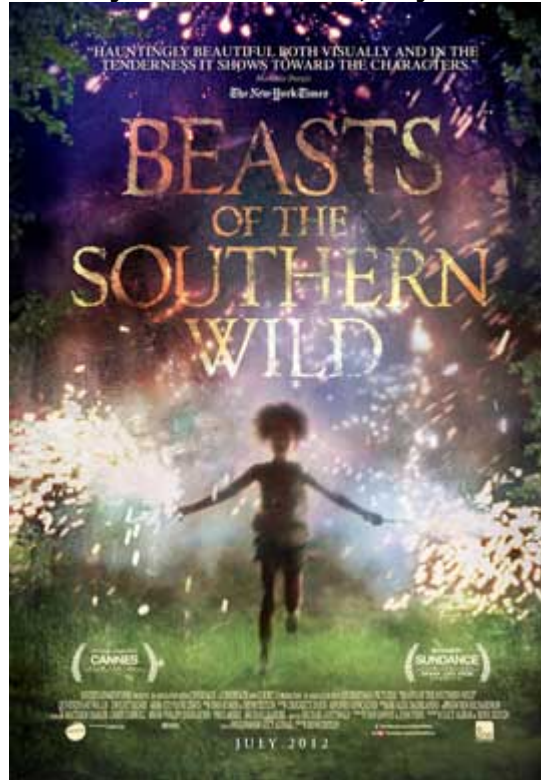


BEASTS OF THE SOUTHERN WILD

By Lorraine Viade, Psy.D.



Beasts of the Southern Wild is not the sort of film you can do justice to with a simple review. It is more visceral than that. The story is felt, smelled, heard and seen through the eyes of an innocence-lost child named Hushpuppy. There are some children who will not be denied anything. Hushpuppy is that sort of child. With heart and determination, she forges relationships with her alcoholic father, the mother who abandoned her, and with the rag tag group of adults and children who refused to be defeated by hurricanes, levee breaks or any other personal disaster in their bathtub of a world. She overcomes it all, staring down anything that might get in her way. She is in control.

It is all about the relationships here. A little girl who thrives in the midst of destruction gives fitting tribute to those warrior kids who can survive anything with iron will and the grace to never give up – no matter what life hands them. The journey takes us into this special place where there is loyalty, friendship, love and true caring. People look out for each other and after one another. To be able to see the beauty in what is around you, even when it looks as though you have nothing, is the essence of the resilient spirit.

To the outside world of government rules and demands, it may look as though these people need to be rescued and to be relocated when they do not. They have everything that truly matters in a world that does not understand what it means to accept life, fate and tragedy on its own terms. Disaster is in forcing people to live and to die in places they don't want to be. *Beasts of the Southern*

Wild is a tale that reminds us that free spirits are still alive and well, roaming along through the places where few would choose to call home. Society does not have much to offer to replace the love of a child for her parents.

These folks who live on the fringe on their own terms and in their own ways have skills and abilities that have been lost to the world of instant gratification and technology addiction. Could you do what this child did under those circumstances at that age? Could you care for yourself and others in ways that mean everything to you? Don't miss the opportunity to find out. Bring your tissue.

I give *Beasts of the Southern Wild* five couches.

